

# CONSTITUTION OF NEW PROSPECT BAPTIST CHURCH

## PREAMBLE

For the more certain preservation and security of the principles of our faith, and to the end that this body may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the accepted tenants of the New Testament and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of this church and the freedom of action of this body with respect to its relation to other churches of the same faith, we do declare and establish this Constitution.

## ARTICLE 1

### *Name, Location and Affiliation*

This congregation shall be known as the New Prospect Baptist Church of Inman Incorporated 9321 Highway 9, Inman, South Carolina 29349.

To better carry out our purposes, this church affiliates itself with the Southern Baptist Convention, The South Carolina Baptist Convention, and the Spartanburg County Baptist Network, recognizing the interests and activities of the organizations as proper and pledging to them our cooperation.

## ARTICLE II

### Character

#### Section 1.

#### *Polity*

The government of this church shall be vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligation of mutual counsel and cooperation that are common among Southern Baptist Churches.

## **SECTION 2.**

### ***Doctrine***

The church receives the Scriptures as its authority in matters of faith and practice. Its understanding of Christian truth as contained therein, is in essential accord with the belief of Southern Baptist Churches as indicated in the Articles of Faith referred to in Article III.

## **ARTICLE III**

### **Declaration of Faith**

The Articles of Faith shall be the nineteen Articles of the New Prospect Baptist Church Statement of Faith.

### **New Prospect Baptist Church Statement of Faith**

#### **1. Of the Scriptures**

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; that it is God's special revelation of Himself to man; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter, that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us; and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried.

Ex. 24:4; II Tim. 3:16-17; II Tim. 3:15; 2 Pet. 1:19-21; Prov. 30:5-6; Rom. 2:12; Deut. 4:1-2, 17:19; Ps. 119:89; Is. 40:8; Mat. 5:17-18; Phil. 3:16; Heb. 1:1-2, Heb. 4:12; 2 Pet. 1:3, I John 4:1

#### **2. Of the True God**

We believe that there is one, and only one living and true God, an infinite, intelligent, spiritual, and personal being, whose name is JEHOVAH, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and supreme Ruler of heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love; God is all powerful, all present, and all knowing; that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; equal in every divine perfection and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

John 4:24; Ps. 83:18; Heb.3:4; Rom. 1:20; Jer.10:10; Ex.15:11; Ps.147:5; Isa.6:3; I Pet.1:15-16; Rev.4:6-8; Mark12:30; Rev.4:11; Matt.10:37; Jer.2:12-13; Matt.28:19; John 15:26; I Cor.12:4-6; I John 5:7; John10:30; John 5:17; John 14:23; John 17:5&10; Acts 5:3-4; I Cor.2:10-11; Phil. 2:5-6; Eph. 2:18; II Cor.13:14; Rev. 1:4-5.

### **3. Of the Fall of Man**

We believe that man is the special creation of God, made in His own image; that God created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation; that the gift of gender, is divinely and inerrantly predetermined for each individual by God, and is thus part of the goodness of God's creation; that man was created in holiness, under the law of his Maker, but by voluntary transgression fell from that holy and happy state; in consequence of which all men and women are now sinners, not by constraint but choice; being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, positively inclined to evil; and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin, without defense or excuse.

Gen.1:26-31; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Ecc.7:29; Acts 17:26-29; Gen.2:16-17; Gen.3:6-24; Rom. 5:12; Rom.5:15-19; Ps.51:5; Rom.8:7; Isa.53:6; Gen.6:12; Rom.3:9-18; Eph.2:1-3; Rom.1:18,32; Rom.2:1-16; Gal.3:10; Matt. 20:15; Ezek. 18:19-20; Rom.1:20; Rom.3:19; Gal. 3:22.

### **4. Of the Family**

We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption. Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime and is defined only by God and not government. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His Church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race. The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models God's relationship with His people. Children are a blessing and heritage from the Lord and are living human beings from the moment of conception. Parents (a father and a mother) are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

### **5. Of the Way of Salvation**

We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace; through the Mediatorial offices of the virgin-born Son of God; who by the appointment of the Father freely took upon him our

nature, yet without sin; honored the divine law by his personal obedience, and by his death made a full atonement for our sins; that having risen bodily from the dead, he is now enthroned in heaven; and uniting in his wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections, he is every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an all-sufficient Savior.

Eph.2:3, Matt. 18:11, I John4:10, I Cor.3:5-7, Acts 15:11, John 3:16, John1:1-14, Heb. 4:14, Heb. 12-24, Phil. 2:9&14, II Cor. 5:21, Isa. 42:21, Phil. 2:8, Gal. 4:4-5, Rom. 3:21, Isa. 53:4-5, Matt. 20:28, Rom.4:25, Rom. 3:21-26, I John 2:3, I Cor. 15:1-3, Heb.9:13-15, Heb.1:8, Heb. 1:3, Col. 3:1-4, Heb. 7:25, Col. 2:18, Heb. 7:26, Ps. 89:19, Ps.34

## **6. Of Justification**

We believe that the great gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in him is justification; that justification includes the pardon of sin, and the promise of eternal life on principles of righteousness; that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood; by virtue of which faith his perfect righteousness is freely imputed to us of God; that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity.

John 1:16, Eph.3:8, Acts 13:39, Isa. 53:11-12, Rom5:1-2, Rom. 5:9, Zech. 13:1, Matt. 9:6, Acts 10:43, Rom. 5:17, Titus 3:5-7, I Peter 3:7, I John 2:25, Rom. 5:21, Rom. 4:4-5, Rom. 6:23, Phil. 3:7-9, Rom. 5:19, Rom. 3:24-26, Rom.4:23-25, I John 2:12, Rom. 5:3, Rom. 5:11, I Cor. 1:30-31, Matt. 6:33, I Tim. 4:8

## **7. Of the Freeness of Salvation**

We believe that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a sincere, penitent, and obedient faith; and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth, but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel; which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation.

## **8. Of Grace in Regeneration**

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be regenerated, or born again; that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind; that it is effected in a manner above our comprehension by the power of the Holy Spirit, in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel; and that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith and newness of life.

John 3:3, John 3:6-7, I Cor.3:14, Rev.14:3, Rev. 21:27, II Cor. 5:17, Ezek. 36:26, Deu. 30-6, Rom. 2:28-29, Rom.5:5, I John 4:7, John 3:8, John 1:13, James 1:16-18, I Cor. 1:30, Phil. 2:13,

I Peter 1:22-25, I John 5:1, Eph. 4:20-24, Col. 3:9-11, Eph. 5:9, Rom. 8:9, Gal. 5:16-23, Eph. 3:14-21, Matt. 3:8-10, Matt. 7:20, I John 5:4, 18

## **9. Of Repentance and Faith**

We believe that repentance and faith are sacred duties and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God; whereby being deeply convinced of our guilt, danger and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession of sin and supplication for mercy; at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as our Prophet, Priest and King, and relying on him alone as the only and all-sufficient Savior.

Mark 1:15, Acts 11:18, Eph. 2:8, I John 5:1, John 16:8, Acts 2:37-38, Acts 16:30-31 Luke 18:13, Luke 15:18-21, James 4:7-10, II Cor. 7:11, Rom. 10:12-13, Ps. 51, Rom. 10:9-11, Acts 3:22-23, Heb. 4:14, Ps. 2:6, Heb. 1:8, Heb. 7:25, II Tim. 1:12

## **10. Of God's Purpose of Grace**

We believe that election is the eternal purpose of God, according to which he graciously regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners; that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end; that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely free, wise, holy and unchangeable; that it utterly excludes boasting, and promotes humility, love, prayer, praise, trust in God, and active imitation of his free mercy; that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree; that it may be ascertained by its effects in all who truly believe the gospel, that it is the foundation of Christian assurance; and that to ascertain it with regard to ourselves demands and deserves the utmost diligence.

II Tim. 1:8-9; Eph. 1:3-14; I Peter 1:1-2; Rom. 11:5-6; John 15:16; I John 4:19; II Thess. 2:13-14; Acts 13:48; John 10:16; Matt. 20:16; Acts 15:14; Ex. 33:18-19; Matt. 20:15; Eph. 1:11; Rom. 9:23-24; Jer. 31:3; Rom. 11:28-29; James 1:17-18; II Tim. 1:9; Rom. 11:32-36; I Cor. 1:26-31; Rom. 3:27; Rom. 4:16; Col. 3:12; I Cor. 3:5-7; I Cor. 15:10; I Peter 5:10; Acts 1:24; I Thess. 2:13; I Peter 2:9; Luke 18:7; John 15:16; I Thess. 2:12; II Tim. 2:10; I Cor. 9:22; Rom. 8:28-30; John 6:37-40; I Thess 1:4-10; Isa. 42:16; Rom. 11:29; II Peter 1:10-11; Phil. 3:12; Heb. 6:11

## **11. Of Sanctification**

We believe that sanctification is the process by which according to the will of God, we are made partakers of his holiness; that it is a progressive work; that it is begun in regeneration; and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Sealer and Comforter, in the continual use of the appointed means- especially the Word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer.

I Thess. 4:3; I Thess. 5:23; II Cor. 7:1; II Cor. 13:10; Phil. 3:12-16; I John 2:29; Rom. 8:5; Eph. 1:4; Pro. 4:18; II Cor. 3:18; Heb. 6:1; II Peter 1:5-8; John 3:6; Phil. 1:9-11; Eph. 1:13-14; Phil. 2:12-13; Eph. 4:11-12; I Peter 2:2; II Peter 3:18; II Cor. 13:5; Luke 11:35; Luke 9:23; Matt. 26:41; Eph.6:18; Eph.4:30

## **12. Of the Perseverance of the Saints**

We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end: that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors; that a special providence watches over their welfare, and that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

John 8:31; I John 2:27-28; I John 3:9; I John 5:18; I John 2:19; John 13:18; Matt. 13:20- 21; John 6:66-69; Job 17:9; Rom. 8:28; Matt. 6:30-33; Jer. 32:40; Ps.121:3; Ps. 91:11-12; Phil. 1:6; Phil. 2:13; Jude 24:25; Heb.1:14; II Kings 6:16; Heb. 13:5; I John 4:4

## **13. Of the Harmony of the Law and the Gospel**

We believe that the law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of His moral government; that it is holy, just and good; and that the inability which the scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfill its precepts arises entirely from their love of sin; to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a Mediator to unfeigned obedience to the holy law, is one great end of the gospel, and of the means of grace connected with the establishment of the visible church.

Rom. 3:31; Matt. 5:17; Luke 16:17; Rom. 3:20; Rom. 4:15; Rom. 7:12; Rom.7:7,14-22; Gal.3:21; Ps. 119; Rom.8:7-8; Josh. 24:19; Jer. 13:23; John 6:44; John 5:44; Rom. 8:2-4; Rom. 10:4; I Tim. 1:5; Heb. 8:10; Jude 20&21

## **14. Of a Gospel Church**

We believe that a local church is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by his laws; and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by his word; that disputed matters between members of a congregation are not to be resolved by any tribunal, court, or judicatory authority of the state; that its only scriptural officers are elders (also referred to as overseers and pastors) and deacons whose qualifications, claims and duties are defined in Scripture.

I Cor. 1:1-3; Matt. 18:17; Acts 5:11; Acts 8:1; Acts 11:21-23; I Cor. 4:17; I Cor. 14:23; III John 9; I Tim. 3:5; Acts 2:41-42; II Cor. 8:5; Acts 2:47; I Cor. 5:12-13; I Cor. 11:2; II Thess. 3:6; Rom. 16:17-20; I Cor.11:23-24; Matt. 18:15-20; I Cor. 5:6; II Cor. 2:17; I Cor. 4:17; Matt. 28:20; John 14:15; John 15:12; I John 14:21; I Thess. 4:2; II John 6; Gal. 6:2; Eph. 4:7; I Cor.

14:12; Phil. 1:1; Acts 14:23; Acts 15:22; 1 Corinthians 6:1-11; Acts 20:17-18, 28; I Tim. 3; Titus 1; 1 Peter 5:1-3

### **15. Of Baptism and the Lord's Supper**

We believe that the Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem, our faith in the crucified, buried and risen Savior, with its effect, in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life; that it is prerequisite to the privileges of a church relation, and to the Lord's Supper; in which the members of the church by the sacred use of bread and the fruit of the vine, are to commemorate together the death of Christ; preceded always by solemn self-examination.

Acts 8:36-39; Matt. 3:5-6; John 3:22-23; John 4:12; Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:12; Acts 16:32-34; Acts 18:8; Acts 10:47-48; Gal.3:26-28; Rom.6:4; Col. 2:12; I Peter 3:20-21; Acts 22:16; Acts 2:41-42; I Cor. 11:26; Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20; I Cor.11:28; I Cor. 5:1-8; I Cor. 10:3-32; I Cor. 11:17-32; John 6:26

### **16. Of the Lord's Day**

We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day; and it is to be kept sacred to religious purposes, by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private and public; and by preparation for the rest that remains for the people of God.

Acts 20:7; Gen. 2:3; Col. 2:16-17; Mark 2:27; John 20:19; I Cor. 16:1-2; Ex. 20:8; Rev. 1:10; Ps. 118:15, 24; Isa. 58:13-14; Isa. 56:2-8; Heb. 10:24-25; Acts 11:26; Acts 13:44; Lev. 19:30; Luke 4:16; Acts 17:2-3; Ps. 26:8; Ps. 87:3; Heb. 4:3-11

### **17. Of the Civil Government**

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society, and that public officials are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed; except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the Prince of the kings of the earth.

Rom. 13:1-7; Deu. 16:18; II Sam. 23:3; Ex. 18:23; Jer. 30:21; Matt. 22:21; Titus 3:1; I Peter 2:13; I Tim. 2:1-4; Acts 5:29; Matt.28; Dan. 3:15-18; Dan. 6:7-10; Acts 4:18-20; Matt. 23:10; Rom. 14:4; Rev. 19:16; Ps.72:11; Ps.2; Rom. 14:9-13

### **18. Of the Righteous and the Wicked**

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that such only as through faith alone are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in his esteem; while all such as continue in

impenitence and unbelief are in his sight wicked, and under the curse; and this distinction holds among men both in and after death.

Mal. 3:18; Pro. 12:26; Isa. 5:20; Gen. 18:23; Jer. 15:19; Acts 10:34-35; Rom. 6:16; Rom. 1:17; Rom. 7:6; I John 2:29; I John 3:7; Rom. 6:18,22; I Cor. 11:32; Pro. 11:31; I Peter 4:17-18; I John 5:19; Gal. 3:10; John 3:36; Isa. 57:21; Ps. 10:4; Isa. 55:6-7; Pro. 14:32; Luke 16:25; John 8:21-24; Pro. 10:24; Luke 12:4-5; Luke 9:23-26; Ecc. 3:17; Matt. 7:13-14

### **19. Of the World to Come**

We believe that the end of the world is approaching; that at the Last Day Christ will descend bodily from heaven, and bodily raise the dead from the grave to final retribution and reward; that a solemn separation will take place; that the wicked will be sentenced to endless punishment, and the righteous to endless joy and glorification; and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of men in heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness.

I Peter 4:7; I Cor. 7:29-31; Heb. 1:10-12; Matt. 24:35; I John 2:17; Matt. 28:20; Matt. 13:39-40; II Peter 3:3-13; Acts 1:11; Rev. 1:7; Heb. 9:28; Acts 3:21; I Thess 4:13-18; I Thess. 5:1-11; Acts 24:15; I Cor. 15:12-58; Luke 14:14; Dan. 12:2 John 5:28-29; John 6:40; John 11:25-26; II Tim. 1:10; Acts 10:42; Matt. 13:49; Matt. 13:37-43; Matt. 24:30-31; Matt. 25:31-46; Rev. 22:11; I Cor. 6:9-10; Mark 9:43-48; II Peter 2:9; Jude 7; Phil. 3:19; Rom. 6:23; II Cor. 5:10-11; John 4:36; II Cor. 4:18; Rom. 3:5-6; II Thess. 1:6-12; Heb. 6:1-2; I Cor. 4:5; Acts 17:31; Rom. 2:2-16; Rev. 20:11-12; I John 2:28; I John 4:17; II Peter 3:11-12

*\*This Statement of Faith has been composed after much prayer and consideration of what the Bible teaches and by use of the revised New Hampshire Confession of Faith from 1853 and the 2000 Southern Baptist Faith and Message.*

## ARTICLE IV

### *Church Covenant*

#### **New Prospect Baptist Church Church Covenant**

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized by immersion in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God, angels, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one local church of Christ.

We will strive to live for the glory of God. We will work together to make disciples of all nations. We will seek to be equipped for the work of ministry for the edification of the Lord's Church. We will train ourselves for godliness, that we may walk in newness of life and carefully in this world. We will bring our children up in the discipline and instruction of our Lord. We will help one another grow toward Christian maturity by giving the loving care to one another as the Lord prescribes in His Word.

We will work together for the advancement of this church by committing ourselves to its worship services, ordinances, discipline, and doctrine as expressed in God's Word. We will commit ourselves to the doctrine set forth in our Statement of Faith and to the governance of our Church Constitution. We will work and pray to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. We will, as the Lord allows, contribute regularly to support the ministry of this church, the relief of the poor and distressed, and the spread of the gospel through our community, county, state, nation, and the world.

We will, if we move from this church, as soon as possible, unite with a church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

## **ARTICLE V**

### ***Adoption, Amendment, and Repeal***

#### ***Section 1.***

##### ***Notification***

The articles and sections of this constitution may be amended at any regular business session of the church, provided two (2) weeks' notice shall have been given that an amendment is to be presented for the consideration, and provided that the substance of Article II be not changed.

#### ***Section 2.***

##### ***Adoption***

The articles and sections of this constitution shall be considered adopted when three-fourths (3/4) of the members present at the conference to which they are presented shall vote for adoption.

#### ***Section 3.***

##### ***Amendment***

Any article, section, or subsection of this constitution may be amended when three-fourths (3/4) of the members present at the conference to which they are presented shall vote for adoption.

#### **Section 4.**

##### ***Repeal***

The adoption of this constitution shall affect repeal of all previously adopted rules, which are not herein readopted.